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## Sequoia High District Employees Plead to Have Jobs Spared

As the high school district's budget deadline looms, employees asked the Board Of Trustees for a last-minute pardon.

By [Austin Walsh](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 15, 2011

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A promotional banner for Beli Deli. On the left is a white plate with the text 'Beli Deli' in red. To the right, a red banner says 'Teach your child proper etiquette and cooking techniques!'. Below that, on a yellow brick background, it says 'Learn how to: cook • serve • set the table'.[View full size](#)

District employees on Wednesday night implored the Sequoia Union High School District Board of Trustees and administration to find alternatives to the funding and job cuts proposed to balance the district's budget.

As the district's May 4 deadline for budget passage looms, nearly \$5 million in budget cuts are being bandied by the board and administration members.

Under the current proposed cuts, the district's student counseling services would see the brunt of reductions through eliminations of one guidance counselor from each of the school's five comprehensive high schools.

Other proposed budget reduction measures include: \$1 million cut from the adult education program, \$600,000 saved by implementing two district-wide furlough days, \$900,000 by reducing or eliminating six administrative positions in the district office, \$200,000 in transportation and bussing services, \$500,000 worth of cuts in funding to the district's charter schools and \$300,000 in other various savings through efficiencies.

Theresa Torres, a guidance counselor at [Carlmont High School](#), advocated for the counseling services to be spared from the ax.

She said that counseling services serve as an intermediary between the life of students at home and school. The services offered by counselors also smooth the transition for students, both when they get to high school and attempt to get into college.

Torres said that should the district approve cutting the counseling services, it would be the students who suffer.

Greg Gruszynski, a teacher at Woodside High School and representative of the district's teaching union, also said the counselors should be saved from cuts as well.

Gruszynski, speaking of behalf of the Sequoia District Teachers Association, said the work of the school counselors help keep district campuses safe as they are often the first to intervene at the first warning sign of students suffering from mental health problems.

"If we are looking at budget cuts, we need to look elsewhere," said Gruszynski, of the proposed reductions to counselors.

Nadia Bledsoe, representing the district's classified employees, said she hoped that the board would strongly consider implementing furlough days rather than laying off school staff.

